mega projects in the public and private sectors. It is also proposed to set up a Power Trading Corporation for purchase of power from the mega projects and sell the same to identified State Electricity Boards. Five Task Forces have been set up to monitor Hydel, Thermal, Systems, Reform & Restructuring and Private Sector Projects. The objective of the Task Forces is to ensure timely completion of the projects and remove bottlenecks.

(b) The estimate of commercial losses of State Electricity Boards for the years 1997-98 and 1998-99 would be available after finalisation of their annual accounts for these years.

(c) and (d) The setting up of Regulatory Commissions would help in rationalising tariffs and also provide for transparent subsidies, wherever required.

The State Governments have the option of providing subsidies over and above those recommended by the regulatory Commissions. Such subsidies could cover concessional power to agriculture and to weaker sections on the condition that the State Governments compensate the State Electricity Boards by providing adequate budgetary support. When tariffs are rationalised and budgetary supports provided, the State Electricity Boards and power utilities will improve their financial health and their capacity to invest in generation, transmission and distribution projects.

Clearance of Power Projects in Assam

257. SHRIMATI BASANTI SARMA: Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) the details of proposals pending with Government for sanction and clearance for setting up of power projects in the state of Assam;

(b) at what stages those projects have been pending, project-wise; and

(c) the steps taken to expedite those projects?

THE MINISTER OF POWER (SHRI P.R. KUMARAMANGALAM): (a) to (c) The DPR for the Lakwa WHR TPP Stage-I of Assam State Electricity Board (25 MW capacity) was received in Central Electricity Authority on 10.8.1998 and is under process for award of techno-economic clearance.

Rajasthan's claim in power projects of Punjab

258. SHRI ONKAR SINGH LAKHAWAT: Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that as per the agreement dated 10th May, 1984 between the Chief Ministers of Rajasthan, Haryana, the then Hon'ble Punjab Governor and the Central Government was to refer the claims of Rajasthan in Power Projects of Punjab to the Supreme court;

(b) whether the matter has been referred to the Supreme Court; and

(c) if not, by when it is likely to be referred?

THE MINISTER OF POWER (SHRI P.R. KUMARAMANGALAM): (a) to (c) An Agreement was drawn up on 10.5.1984 amongst Punjab, Haryana, Rajasthan and the Central Government for making a reference to the Supreme Court on the question of entitlement of Haryana and Rajasthan to a share in the power generated in the Anandpur Sahib Hydel Project, Mukerian Hydel Project, Thein Dam Project, Upper Bari Doab Canal (UBDC) Stage-II and Shahpur Kandi Hydel Scheme; and, in the case of there being such an entitlement, to determine the share of each State. Thereafter, it was decided to defer making a reference to Supreme Court until all avenues of settlement are explored. The subject was discussed in meetings held by the Ministry of Water Resources. However, no consensus could be reached.